

and question of fact, on which fierce controversy arose. It divided

the order into two schools, the conventuals and the spirituals.

In 1275 the spirituals, who clung to the original ideals and rules of Francis, were treated as heretics and persecuted. They rated

Francis as another Christ, and the rule as a new revelation.

They always were liable to fall into sympathy with enthusiastic

sects which were rated as heretical.¹ The Franciscans also, in

their origin, were somewhat independent of hierarchical authority

and of established discipline. It was necessary that the order

should be brought into the existing ecclesiastical system. The

popes of the thirteenth century until Boniface VIII accepted

the standards of the age and approved of the mendicant friars.

In 1279, in the bull *Exiit qtd seminal'*, the Franciscan rule was

ascribed to revelation by the Holy Ghost, and the renunciation

of property was approved. The use of property was right, but

the ownership was wrong.² Boniface was of another school.

He was a practical man who meant to increase the power of the

hierarchy. Absurd as was the notion of non-property, it was at

least germane to the doctrine of Christianity that Christians

ought to renounce the pomps and vanities of wealth and the

struggle for power, and to live in frugality, simplicity, and

mutual service. The papal hierarchy was in pursuit of pomp

and luxury and, above all, of power and dominion. Boniface

ordered the spiritual Franciscans to conform to the rule of the

conventuals. Some would not obey and became heretics and

martyrs. Their zeal for the ideas and rule of Francis was so

great that they welcomed martyrdom for their adherence.³ The

most distinguished of the martyrs of the spirituals

was Bernard
 Delicieux, who found himself at war with the
 Inquisition and the
 pope, and who, after a trial in which all the arts of
 browbeating
 and torture were exhausted, died a prisoner, in
 chains, on bread
 and water.⁴ The other party also had its martyrs,
 who were
 willing to die for the doctrine that Christ and his
 apostles did
 not live by beggary.⁵ Any doctrine that the
 apostles lived in
 poverty, by begging, was a criticism of the
 hierarchy as it then

¹ Lea, *Inquis.*, III, 33.

² *Ibid.*, 30.

³ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 75, 99.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.